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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION ON THE SECOND PART OF ITS THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION*

* The present document is a mimeographed version of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of the second part of its thirty-sixth session. The final report will be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/51/16) and will include the report of the Committee on the first part of the session (A/51/16 (Part I)).

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/GATT)
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDCP	United Nations Drug Control Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WTO	World Trade Organization

Part two

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION ON THE SECOND PART OF ITS THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from
26 August to 6 September 1996

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) held the second part of its thirty-sixth session at United Nations Headquarters from 26 August to 6 September 1996. It held five meetings (36th to 40th meetings) and a number of informal consultations.

2. At its 36th meeting, the Committee considered document E/AC.51/1996/L.7/Rev.1, containing the proposed programme of work for the second part of the thirty-sixth session. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the programme of work as orally amended during the discussion.

A. Agenda

3. The agenda for the thirty-sixth session as a whole, adopted by the Committee at its 1st meeting, on 3 May 1996, is reproduced in annex I to the report of the Committee on the first part of its thirty-sixth session (A/51/16 (Part I)).

B. Election of officers

4. At its 36th meeting, the Committee was informed that Mr. Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine) would not participate in the second part of the thirty-sixth session. It therefore became necessary to elect a Rapporteur for the second part of the session. On the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee elected, by acclamation, Mr. Anatoliy Oliynyk (Ukraine) as Rapporteur for the second part of the thirty-sixth session.

C. Attendance

5. The following States members of the Committee were represented:

Argentina
Bahamas
Belarus
Benin
Brazil
Cameroon
Canada
China
Comoros
Congo
Cuba
Egypt
France
Germany
Ghana
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Japan
Mexico
Netherlands
Norway
Pakistan
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Senegal
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay
Zaire

6. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers:

Algeria
Australia
Austria
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Guatemala
Ireland
Italy
Morocco
Nicaragua
Panama
Philippines
Portugal
Thailand
Tunisia
Turkey

7. The following specialized agencies and regional commissions were represented:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Regional Commissions New York Office

8. Also present at the session were the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management and senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat.

D. Documentation

9. The list of documents before the Committee at the second part of its thirty-sixth session is set out in the annex to the present report.

E. Adoption of the report of the Committee

10. At its 40th meeting, on 6 September 1996, the Committee adopted the draft report on the second part of its thirty-sixth session (E/AC.51/1996/L.8 and Add.1-27).

II. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

A. Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

General considerations

Conclusions and recommendations

11. The Committee had considered the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6) during the first part of its thirty-sixth session. At the second part of that session, the Committee was to review the twenty-five programmes of the proposed medium-term plan, in accordance with the programme planning regulations and rules.

12. The Committee invited the General Assembly to consider the following conclusions and recommendations on the proposed medium-term plan, subject to the adoption of a final decision by the General Assembly on the programmatic structure of the proposed medium-term plan.

Note by the Secretary-General

13. At its 36th and 37th meetings, on 26 and 28 August 1996, the Committee considered the note by the Secretary-General (A/51/6 (Note)).

Discussion

14. Many delegations welcomed the note and were of the view that it should be included as an integral part of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. They noted that the format of the note followed the recommendations made by the Committee at its thirty-fourth session, namely sections dealing with persistent problems, emerging trends, challenges, the role of the Organization, and directions to be pursued and priorities. They welcomed the fact that the text was based largely on agreements reached by intergovernmental bodies, including General Assembly resolution 50/6 of 24 October 1995 entitled the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, and on texts agreed upon by the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development.

15. One delegation stated that the Declaration, as a consensus resolution rather than a signed intergovernmental agreement, should not serve as a basis for the note.

16. Other delegations referred to the present status of discussions on the Agenda for Development where agreement had been reached on individual segments, conditioned by an eventual overall agreement on the Agenda as a whole. Some delegations stressed that the Working Group texts were still at the proposal stage, had not been endorsed by the competent intergovernmental bodies and therefore could not constitute a basis for the medium-term plan.

17. Many delegations welcomed the positive response made by the Secretariat to the concerns that had been expressed by some delegations during the first part of the Committee's session. They considered that the note was balanced, particularly in terms of the attention given to development issues. Many

delegations considered the note to be a good basis for reaching consensus, subject to further refinements.

18. Other delegations stated that the note did not reflect the medium-term plan and was therefore unsuited to provide an overview of that plan, especially as it gave particular emphasis to development issues to the detriment of other programmes and issues.

19. Some delegations expressed the view that the note was not balanced, was too long and too general. They were of the view that the language of the note did not accurately reflect consensus reached at the major United Nations conferences or approved by other intergovernmental bodies. They were of the view that the note could not replace the Perspective (A/51/6 (Perspective)) that was considered at the first part of the Committee's thirty-sixth session. They underlined that there was no consensus on any recommendation to delete the Perspective from the proposed medium-term plan.

20. Many delegations stressed that the end of the cold war had removed many of the previous constraints on the functioning of the Organization, not only on its political role. In discussing the role of the Organization, some delegations felt that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be fully respected and were of the view that the Organization must refrain from intervening in matters that were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State.

21. Referring to paragraph 24 of the note, some delegations pointed out that the acceptance of the Secretary-General's good offices depended on the consent of the States concerned and no departure from that principle was acceptable. Other delegations stressed the importance of safeguarding the Secretary-General's freedom of action under the Charter, particularly in the field of maintenance of international peace and security.

22. Some delegations underlined the importance of continued reaffirmation of the inalienable right of self-determination of all peoples, taking into account the particular situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation and recognition of the right of peoples to take legitimate action in accordance with the Charter to realize their inalienable right of self-determination. Some delegations stated that the exercise of the right of self-determination should not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action that would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States.

23. Some delegations rejected the linkage made between democratization and the establishment of a multi-party system.

24. Some delegations expressed the view that the problems of countries with economies in transition were not adequately reflected. Several delegations expressed the view that the note should address more fully the question of disarmament, organized crime, illicit trade of arms and drugs, landmines and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

25. One delegation expressed the view that as globalization and interdependence in the world economy continued to grow, an historic opportunity had arisen for constructive dialogue for the promotion of international cooperation for development, based on the imperatives of mutual interests and benefits, shared responsibilities and genuine interdependence. Therefore, the much-lauded spirit of partnership should be further strengthened and more broadly embraced when

such a dialogue was held in the General Assembly. That delegation also underlined the important role of regional economic groupings as a catalyst for global economic growth and expansion of trade.

26. Many delegations stressed that the priorities proposed by the Secretary-General were of equal status and that the listing did not mean any specific order of priority. Some delegations were of the view that disarmament issues should be included among the priorities. Other delegations stated their general agreement with the priorities listed.

27. One delegation stressed that global issues such as population, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), drugs, crime, environment and mine clearance should also be included among the priorities.

28. Some delegations expressed the view that the adoption of an introduction to the medium-term plan outlining the priorities of the United Nations was a prerequisite to the adoption of the plan.

29. Many delegations expressed the view that the note should also stress that Member States must meet their financial obligations in full, on time and without conditions.

Conclusions and recommendations

30. The Committee recalled General Assembly decision 50/452 of 22 December 1995, by which the Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to begin preparation of the medium-term plan on the basis of recommendations of the Committee at its thirty-fourth session and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and taking into account views expressed by Member States in the Fifth Committee. The Committee welcomed the strict observance in document A/51/6 (Note) of the format that it had recommended at its thirty-fourth session, namely sections dealing with persistent problems, emerging trends, challenges, the role of the Organization, and directions to be pursued and priorities.

31. The Committee took note of document A/51/6 (Note), which was submitted by the Secretary-General to be considered for inclusion in the medium-term plan in response to the request made by the Committee as stated in paragraph 48 of its report on the first part of its current session (A/51/16 (Part I)), and recommended that the General Assembly, in considering the document, pay due attention to the observations expressed in paragraphs 13 to 31 of the report of the Committee on the second part of its thirty-sixth session.

Programme 1. Political affairs

32. At its 18th, 19th and 21st meetings, on 13, 14 and 17 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 1, Political affairs, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 1)).

Discussion

33. Many delegations expressed support for the programme, while others considered that the programme did not fully reflect views expressed in various forums, in particular as regards subprogramme 1.3, Disarmament.

34. Several delegations queried whether all activities proposed to be carried out under the programme were mandated, and some proposed inclusion of relevant legislative mandates under this programme as well as others. Other delegations believed that the programme identified the new tasks and mandates for the Department for Political Affairs in preventive action, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building.

35. One delegation stated that there appeared to be overlapping of objectives between subprogrammes 1.1 and 1.2. It was explained that the services provided under subprogramme 1.2 extended beyond those of subprogramme 1.1 as they related to non-conflict situations that were beyond the scope of subprogramme 1.1.

36. Several delegations queried the United Nations role in enhancing the capacity of regional organizations in early warning and preventive peacemaking and peace-building, referred to in paragraph 1.7. Other delegations emphasized the importance of contacts between the Department and the regional organizations.

37. Several delegations indicated that emphasis seemed to be placed on the servicing aspects of subprogramme 1.3, Disarmament, rather than its substantive and technical features. Many delegations were concerned that subprogramme 1.3 emphasized the micro rather than the macro aspects of disarmament such as nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and conventional weapons.

38. Several delegations indicated that the use of phraseology such as post-disarmament problems (para. 1.15) and disarmament as an essential component/a tool of preventive diplomacy and peace-building (paras. 1.16 and 1.18) had not been agreed to in disarmament forums.

39. Some delegations questioned the basis on which it was stated in subprogramme 1.3 that the positive outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Parts I-III)) had opened up a more promising path to nuclear disarmament and noted the absence of the objective of elimination of nuclear weapons in the subprogramme.

40. Many delegations indicated there was no consensus regarding the meaning of potential conflicts. Many delegations also disagreed with the mention of the Register of Conventional Arms as an important confidence-building measure as well as its possible regional variants. Other delegations reaffirmed the importance they attached to the Register. The need for giving priority to developing countries in activities regarding fellowships, training and advisory services was also pointed out by several delegations.

41. Some delegations expressed the view that the importance to be accorded to disarmament subprogramme 1.3 was such that it should be presented as a separate programme. It was pointed out, however, that the proposed medium-term plan had been drafted on the basis of an agreed format that had been recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination to the General Assembly. The format had been devised to permit a clearer alignment between programmes and organizational units so that accountability would be enhanced.

42. Some delegations regretted that General Assembly resolutions 48/124 of 20 December 1993 and 49/180 of 23 December 1994 had not been cited as legislative mandates of activities regarding electoral assistance.

43. Some delegations were of the view that greater emphasis could have been placed on the activities of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, while others regarded the work of the Special Committee as being largely accomplished, so that significant changes would not be expected during the plan period.

44. Some delegations stated that the overall objectives of the programme must include the promotion and realization by all peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation of their right to self-determination, since denial of that right had been and was a cause of conflict situation.

45. Several delegations expressed their support for subprogramme 1.7, Question of Palestine, while others expressed reservations. Others queried the need for continued expansion of the computer-based United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) and suggested that the need was for continued maintenance.

46. The Committee discussed the following proposed amendments:

(a) Paragraph 1.1: In the first sentence, add the words "and resolutions" after the word "Charter" and delete the second sentence;

(b) Paragraph 1.3: In the fifth line of the paragraph following the words "and by", add "mandates provided by"; in the sixth line of the paragraph, after the words "Security Council", add the words "which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security" and delete the words "as well as in other resolutions of those bodies in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building, disarmament affairs, electoral assistance and the provision of secretariat services to principal organs" at the end of the sentence;

(c) Paragraph 1.4 (b): Following the word "conflicts", add "that threaten international peace and security and";

(d) Paragraph 1.4 (d): Replace the paragraph with the following:

"Assistance to the Security Council and the Secretary-General in carrying out activities mandated by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Charter in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building";

(e) Paragraph 1.4 (h): Delete the words "as well as the Trusteeship Council if the need arises";

(f) Paragraph 1.5: In the first sentence, replace the words "a dramatic" with "an" and add the word "international" before "peace and security"; and in the second sentence, after the word "responsibilities", add "for the pacific settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations and";

(g) Paragraph 1.6: In the first sentence, replace the words "A second objective is" with "It would also be necessary", and add the words "that

threaten international peace and security" after "conflicts"; at the end of the second sentence, after "conflicts" add the words ", and the General Assembly and the Security Council to be advised accordingly"; and in the third sentence, add the phrase "post-conflict" before the word "peace-building";

(h) Paragraph 1.7: In the first sentence, replace the word "disputes" with "threats to international peace and security"; in the second sentence, add the word "accordingly" after "will"; in the third sentence, delete the words "in particular, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs," and ", so that the relevant departments function as an integrated whole under the authority and control of the Secretary-General to address complex issues of a multifaceted nature"; in the fourth sentence, replace the words "complex operations in the field" with "peacekeeping operations"; and in the last sentence, add the words "in accordance with provisions of the Charter and, as appropriate," after "Political Affairs", add the word "relevant" after "organizations" and add "post-conflict" before "peace-building";

(i) Paragraph 1.8: In the first sentence, add the words "by the Security Council or" after "dispatched" and in the second sentence, add the word "post-conflict" before "peace-building";

(j) Paragraph 1.9: Delete the second sentence and replace with "During the period 1998-2001, the Secretary-General, in implementing this subprogramme, will continue his efforts to enhance the Organization's capacity in the field of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking.";

(k) Paragraph 1.10: In the first sentence, replace "quiet diplomacy" with "good offices" and at the end of the sentence add "while fully respecting the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Member States and non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, as well as the principle of consent; and in the last sentence, replace the words "especially the definition of the political objectives of peace-building activities and their planning and coordination" with "as approved by the relevant intergovernmental bodies";

(l) Paragraph 1.11: In the second sentence, add the word "international" before "peace and security";

(m) Paragraph 1.12: In the third sentence, add the word "international" before "peace and security" and at the end of the sentence add "as well as Member States through the Secretary-General"; and in the last sentence, add the word "relevant" after "Contact with" and delete ", relevant non-governmental organizations and other private academic and research institutes";

(n) Subprogramme 1.3 Disarmament and all related paragraphs, 1.13 to 1.18. To present subprogramme 1.3, "Disarmament", as a new independent programme in the medium-term plan;

(o) Paragraph 1.13: Replace the paragraph with the following: "Recent positive changes in international relations have allowed for significant progress on a number of disarmament and [non-proliferation/arms control] issues. The outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has, among other developments, [pointed to the need to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects/underlined the international community's resolve to constrain the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction].

However, further substantive measures [are required/have been suggested] in order to advance the process towards the ultimate goal of elimination of nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament within a time-bound framework. Problems related, inter alia, to the unrestricted transfer of conventional weapons remain a concern. There are also continuing problems relating to, inter alia, the proliferation of small arms, all types of landmines and the illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials.";

(p) Paragraph 1.14 Replace the words "organizational and substantive secretariat support" with "substantive and secretariat services";

(q) Paragraph 1.15: Replace the paragraph with the following: "A second objective is to follow and assess current and future trends in the field of disarmament and international security in order to enable the Secretary-General to render appropriate assistance to Member States in their search for agreement. Apart from substantive issues involved in the deliberative and/or negotiating process, [this activity/the Secretary-General] will also address the challenges arising from the implementation of disarmament agreements. In this regard, particular attention should be paid, inter alia, to the conclusion and entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty; the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and their complete elimination over a time-frame period; the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; and other activities, such as the relationship between disarmament and development and the impact of disarmament on the environment." "Furthermore, as part of the mandate given to him in the field of transparency and confidence-building measures, the Secretary-General will continue to maintain the Register of Conventional Arms.";

(r) Paragraph 1.16: Replace the paragraph with the following: "Since regional and global approaches to disarmament complement each other, a third objective will be to promote global and regional disarmament efforts and initiatives as [an essential/a] component of preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building. Regional solutions will be more vigorously pursued as regional conflicts increasingly pose a threat to peace and security, subject to an agreed definition of the region concerned by and with the consent of all parties. Regional dialogue on crucial disarmament and security issues will be advanced through the organization of conferences subject to the consent of all parties in the region. Efforts will be made to promote confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels with a view to promoting security and disarmament. Member States will be assisted in addressing specific disarmament concerns through the provision of training, fellowships and advisory services";

(s) Paragraph 1.17 Replace the paragraph with the following: "The fourth objective consists of providing impartial, factual information on the disarmament efforts of the United Nations to Member States, parliamentarians, research and academic institutions, and specialized non-governmental organizations through the disarmament information programme and disarmament database of the centres. This would include the organization of disarmament conferences, seminars and workshops for informal exchanges of views on topical issues of arms control, disarmament and international security. The disarmament fellowship programme will continue to be pursued with the primary objective of promoting further the disarmament expertise of Member States, particularly in the developing countries.";

(t) Paragraph 1.17 bis: Add a new paragraph to read: "A fifth objective would be to continue to inform the public on an objective and updated basis as to United Nations disarmament activities, utilizing the three regional centres for peace and disarmament established in Nepal, Peru and Togo, as well as to maintain its role as part of the United Nations disarmament information programme. Voluntary contributions to the fund for the centres should be encouraged" and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

(u) Paragraph 1.18: Replace the words "contribute to an integrated approach to issues relating to the maintenance of peace and security using disarmament as a tool of preventive diplomacy and peace-building" with "focus on the importance of disarmament and confidence-building measures as a tool for strengthening the process of post-conflict peace-building, as appropriate";

(v) Paragraph 1.19: In the first sentence, add the words "and in accordance with the decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly" after "request";

(w) Paragraph 1.21: Replace the first sentence with the following: "During the plan period, this subprogramme will contribute to an integrated approach to the maintenance of international peace and security through the provision of electoral assistance by the Secretariat, at the request of Member States, as a means of supporting the Organization's efforts in preventive, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building activities";

(x) Paragraph 1.30: Replace the paragraph with the following: "The fifth objective of this subprogramme is to ensure the effective implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and, in accordance with established practice and the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to [provide/assist the United Nations through provision of] substantive services to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration and to follow up on the implementation of relevant resolutions of the Assembly";

(y) Paragraph 1.31: Delete the entire paragraph and renumber the subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

(z) Paragraph 1.34: Replace the word "States" with "parties";

(aa) Paragraph 1.35: Replace the words "Palestine Liberation Organization" with "Palestinian National Authority";

(bb) Paragraph 1.36: Add the words "and concerned" after "prominent".

Conclusions and recommendations

47. The Committee considered programme 1: Political affairs. During the discussion, divergent opinions were expressed on the content and structure of the programme. In this regard, the Committee took note of the programme and recommended the General Assembly to consider the programme taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed and amendments proposed by Member States as reflected in the discussion part above.

Programme 2. Peacekeeping operations

48. At its 19th to 21st meetings, on 14 and 17 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 2, Peacekeeping operations, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 2)).

Discussion

49. Many delegations stressed the importance of the programme, although some believed that the priority given to peacekeeping should be without prejudice to the activities related to international cooperation for development. Several delegations expressed the view that a number of elements in the programme were not linked to existing mandates. Other delegations welcomed the determination of timely peacekeeping tasks, in particular the stress on the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping and the need to maintain a capacity for an expansion in demand for peacekeeping. Some delegations were concerned that a number of elements had been included in the programme for which no agreement had yet been reached. Other delegations expressed the view that references to a potential increase in the number of peacekeeping operations in the plan period was speculative and should be deleted. Some delegations underscored that all aspects of peacekeeping operations should adhere strictly to the principles and purposes of the Charter. They believed that peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. Some delegations stressed that the principle of consent of the parties was essential for the conduct of peacekeeping operations. Other delegations observed that the issues were often particularly complex and sometimes fell under the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter; while they recognized the need to respect national sovereignty they could not agree that consent was essential in every instance. A number of delegations underscored the importance of defining precise and feasible objectives for peacekeeping operations. One delegation pointed out that the programme of work of peacekeeping should vary according to the nature of the particular programme, namely, substantive activities and servicing activities. One delegation stressed that the role of the General Assembly should be enhanced in all aspects of peacekeeping operations.

50. A number of delegations expressed concern about the use of seconded and loaned personnel and believed that its use impinged on the impartiality of those personnel. Accordingly, the practice should be discouraged. Other delegations welcomed the valuable work carried out by the loaned personnel. Some delegations emphasized the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Other delegations underlined the paramount importance of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter in that regard. Other delegations stressed the need to ensure that sufficient resources were made available for the successful implementation of mandates and indicated that if peacekeeping was a priority, personnel in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be fully funded in order to avoid increased reliance on personnel loaned by Member States. Several delegations noted with appreciation the work of the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department and spoke in favour of providing the Unit with a more regular and predictable source of financing. Some delegations stressed the importance of the congruence of objectives and mandates to prompt payment by Member States. Other delegations stressed the importance of expeditious reimbursement to troop-contributing countries. Some delegations stressed the importance of streamlining procedures for reimbursement to Member States in respect of troops and equipment. One delegation welcomed,

in particular, the coverage of United Nations civilian police in the draft programme.

51. Many delegations called for the establishment of a uniform scale of death and disability compensation for United Nations personnel and expressed the view that the processing of these claims should be a priority under the programme.

52. Some delegations were of the view that the details of a rapidly deployable headquarters team were still under discussion and there was no agreement on the form or mode of payment for the arrangement. Concerns were also expressed on the lack of transparency in the development and composition of the proposed arrangement.

Conclusions and recommendations

53. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 2 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 2.1: Replace the paragraph with the following:

"2.1 Peacekeeping remains a dynamic and demanding activity of the United Nations. In spite of the recent decrease in the establishment of new operations and a decline in the number of peacekeepers deployed, it is essential for the United Nations to be able to respond to threats to international peace and security, including through mounting future peacekeeping operations in a range of different settings, when mandated. Every effort will be made to seek the early resolution of conflicts through pacific settlement of disputes by the parties concerned through negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means in accordance with the Charter. However, peacekeeping will be one of the key instruments available to the United Nations to resolve conflicts and to maintain international peace and security and will be used to implement peace agreements agreed by the parties and to prevent conflict situations from escalating while ways to resolve the conflict peacefully are being pursued. The use of preventive deployment, when mandated, could be a factor contributing to international peace and security";

(b) Paragraph 2.2: Replace the paragraph with the following:

"2.2 While the number of peacekeeping missions is likely to fluctuate in response to the international situation, one of the main purposes of the United Nations as derived from Article 1 of the Charter, the maintenance of international peace and security, will continue. Thus, the capacity of the United Nations to launch and support mandated peacekeeping operations in response to Security Council decisions will remain essential";

(c) Paragraph 2.3: In the second sentence, add the word "mandated" before "peacekeeping" and delete the words "that the Security Council or the General Assembly establish";

(d) Paragraph 2.4: Replace the words "resolutions and decisions, in particular those of the Security Council, that relate to specific operations" with the words "principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations", and, at the end of the paragraph, add "and on the administrative and budgetary

aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, the most recent of which is resolution 50/221 B of 7 June 1996. In respect of specific peacekeeping operations, legislative authority derives from specific decisions and resolutions of the Security Council related to particular operations";

(e) Paragraph 2.5 (a): In the second sentence, delete the word "multidimensional" and replace the word "is" with the words "may be", and, in the last sentence, replace the words "Even consent-based" with the word "Such" and replace the word "will" with the word "could";

(f) Paragraph 2.5 (b): Replace the subparagraph with the following:

"(b) Multiple tasks. In recent experience, some peacekeeping operations have been mandated to include different combinations of the following tasks: monitoring of cease-fires and buffer zones, protecting humanitarian convoys, disarming and demobilizing ex-combatants, reforming military establishments, demining, establishing police forces, organizing or monitoring elections, monitoring human rights, promoting electoral and judicial reform, promoting aspects of civil administration and coordinating economic rehabilitation. The United Nations must maintain a capacity to discharge effectively these tasks as mandated in accordance with the Charter";

(g) Paragraph 2.5 (c): Replace the subparagraph with the following:

"(c) Active collaboration. The United Nations reaffirms the important contribution that regional arrangements and agencies can make in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, including where appropriate, to peacekeeping. The strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements, within their respective mandates, scope and composition is, therefore, encouraged in order to enhance the capabilities of the international community in the maintenance of international peace and security. Furthermore, there is a need to enhance, as necessary, cooperation between peacekeeping operations and other related United Nations activities and to continue to explore ways and means of ensuring cooperation with other agencies of the United Nations system";

(h) Paragraph 2.6 (c) bis: Add a new subparagraph after paragraph 2.6 (c) reading:

"(d) The provision of Headquarters support for peacekeeping operations, including through coordination of the efforts of relevant United Nations departments"

and renumber the subsequent subparagraphs accordingly;

(i) Paragraph 2.6 (e) (former paragraph 2.6 (d)): Replace the subparagraph with the following:

"(e) The enhancement of contacts with Member States in order to encourage a wider group of Member States to develop, in cooperation with the Secretariat, arrangements for military, police and civilian personnel to participate in peacekeeping operations";

(j) New paragraph 2.6 (f) bis: Add a new subparagraph after paragraph 2.6 (f) (former paragraph 2.6 (e)) reading:

"(g) The development, in the most transparent manner, of a rapidly deployable team composed of persons skilled in the essential military and civilian headquarters functions giving detailed consideration to its structure and mode of funding";

(k) Paragraph 2.7: Add the word "all" after the phrase "the Secretary-General on" and delete the word "military" before the word "implications";

(l) Paragraph 2.9: Delete the words "and various ad hoc intergovernmental committees on issues relating to peacekeeping";

(m) Paragraph 2.10: In the first sentence, delete the words ", particularly in complex settings; to create an integrated communications and information management system linking field missions and Headquarters units in order to enhance immediate communications and to ensure that information can be easily retrieved for purposes of lessons-learned studies and related analysis; and to provide a pallet of communications tools, including video teleconferencing, to enhance crisis decision-making", and, in the second sentence, delete the word "doctrinal";

(n) Paragraph 2.12: In the second sentence, add the words "as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates" after the words "regional organizations" and delete "(the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for African Unity, the Organization of American States, etc.)";

(o) Paragraph 2.13: At the beginning of the last sentence, add the words "of Operations" after the words "The Office" and replace the word "required", at the end of the sentence, with the word "appropriate";

(p) Paragraph 2.14: Add the word "technical" after the word "maintain";

(q) Paragraph 2.15: Replace the words "field mission activities undertaken under programme 1, Political affairs, programme 19, Humanitarian affairs, and other programmes and subprogrammes" with the words "other United Nations mandated activities in the field";

(r) Paragraph 2.17: Add the words "efficiency and" before the word "coordination", replace the words "review and verification of all claims relating to peacekeeping operations, including claims from troop-contributing countries" with the words "in the development and implementation of improved procurement practices" and add, at the end of the paragraph, the words "subject to and in accordance with the mandates of the relevant intergovernmental bodies. High priority will be given to the review and verification of all claims relating to peacekeeping operations, including claims from troop-contributing countries, and the possible revisions of current arrangements for death and disability benefits";

(s) Paragraph 2.18: Delete the words "medical support and training" in the first sentence, and delete the words "financial resources" in the last sentence;

(t) Paragraph 2.20: Add, at the end of the paragraph, a new sentence reading "All of the activities should be carried out bearing in mind the linguistic and cultural diversity of the countries concerned";

(u) Paragraph 2.21: Delete the words "the Organization's capacity to respond quickly to crises, and will further develop" in the first sentence, and delete the words "develop a central medical depot for the supply of medical equipment and consumables to all United Nations mission areas; establish, in cooperation with the United Nations Medical Service, a medical database to include all epidemiological information in order to improve prevention, management and control of diseases in peacekeeping mission areas; and develop a system of pre-deployment medical information and training, including new training programmes for the United Nations medical staff of troop contributing countries" in the second sentence.

Programme 3. Outer space affairs

54. At its 22nd meeting, on 17 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 3, Outer space affairs, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 3)).

Discussion

55. A number of delegations expressed support for the programme. One delegation stressed the need to set priorities in its implementation, and that delegation stated that the promotion of international cooperation in the application of space technology for peaceful purposes should be identified as a priority. One delegation noted that it did not consider the programme to be a high priority for the United Nations. One noted that in established United Nations practice the phrase "for sustainable development" was always preceded by the phrase "sustained economic growth" and that the medium-term plan usage should therefore be brought into line with that practice. Other delegations did not accept that this was standard United Nations practice and could not accept inclusion of the language.

56. Several delegations stressed the need to facilitate the establishment of new regional centres for space science and technology education affiliated with the United Nations and to render assistance to existing ones.

57. Delegations proposed the retention of the former programme title "Peaceful uses of outer space" and to replace all references to the new programme title "Outer space affairs" in the document with "Peaceful uses of outer space".

Conclusions and recommendations

58. The Committee recommended approval of programme 3 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 3.1: Replace the word "and" with "or" in the second line of the paragraph and add the words "as appropriate" after "private sector";

(b) Paragraph 3.4 (f): Replace the words "support in the preparation of a third United Nations Conference on Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" with "a special session of the Committee (UNISPACE III), open to all Members of the United Nations, to be convened at the United Nations Office at Vienna, preferably in 1999, unless progress towards agreeing on an agenda at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-fourth session makes it more appropriate to consider the year 2000";

(c) Paragraph 3.4 (h): Insert, at the end of the paragraph, the words "and the protection of the space environment";

(d) Paragraph 3.5: Delete the last sentence;

(e) Paragraph 3.6: Add the word "technical" before "assistance" in the last sentence;

(f) Paragraph 3.6 bis: Add a new paragraph, as follows:

"3.7 Furthermore, in accordance with the recommendations of UNISPACE II, capacity and regional cooperation on space science and technology should be promoted through the establishment and consolidation of regional centres for space and technology education affiliated with the United Nations, including those which have been created or those in an advance process of creation";

and renumber the subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

(g) Paragraph 3.9 (former para. 3.8): Insert in the first sentence after the word "Organization" the words "through the provision of required expertise in determining the benefits of such technology".

Programme 4. Legal affairs

59. At its 19th meeting, on 14 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 4, Legal affairs, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 4)).

Discussion

60. Many delegations expressed support for the programme. A number of delegations expressed the view that the United Nations role in the elimination of international terrorism had not been adequately reflected.

61. Many delegations expressed support for the computerization of treaty registration and publication. Some delegations emphasized the need to continue publications in all the official languages, by conventional means, bearing in mind the different levels of technological development in Member States.

62. Many delegations also expressed support for the training and technical assistance programmes undertaken by the United Nations in support of progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade.

Conclusions and recommendations

63. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 4 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 4.4 (f): Delete the words "the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, a record of the practice of the General Assembly in procedural matters";

(b) Paragraph 4.6: Delete, in the first sentence, the words "on complex and often politically sensitive questions"; and add at the end of the penultimate sentence, the words "as well as in regard to economic and social activities";

(c) Paragraph 4.6 bis: Add a new paragraph after paragraph 4.6 to read as follows:

"4.7 A further objective of this subprogramme is to prepare the Repertory of Practice of the United Nations Organs, a record of the practice of the General Assembly in procedural matters"

and renumber the subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

(d) Paragraph 4.9 (former para. 4.8): In the first sentence, add the words "ad hoc" before the words "International Tribunals";

(e) Paragraph 4.13 (former para. 4.12): At the end of the last sentence, delete the words "and initiatives to counter epidemics and other hazards";

(f) New paragraph 4.17 bis: Add a new paragraph after paragraph 4.17 (former para. 4.16) to read as follows:

"4.18 In connection with the first objective, the Division has responsibility to undertake further work to implement General Assembly resolutions 49/60 of 9 December 1994 and 50/53 of 11 December 1995 on the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate Terrorism and thus to follow up closely the implementation of paragraph 10 of the Declaration and to submit annual reports thereon. The practical measures to be taken by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Declaration are a collection of data on the status and implementation of existing agreements, including information on incidents caused by international terrorism; a compendium of national laws and regulations; an analytical review of existing international legal instruments to assist States in identifying aspects that could be addressed to develop further a comprehensive legal framework of conventions dealing with international terrorism; and a review of existing possibilities within the United Nations system to assisting States in organizing workshops and training courses in combating crimes of international terrorism"

and renumber the subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

(g) Paragraph 4.19 (former para. 4.17): Add the words "in the official languages of the United Nations" after the word "publications".

Programme 5. Policy coordination and sustainable development

64. At its 23rd and 24th meetings, on 18 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 5, Policy coordination and sustainable development, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 5)).

Discussion

65. Many delegations expressed the view that the programme was consistent with existing mandates. Other delegations were of the view that the presentation of the programme did not adequately reflect the role that the United Nations plays in the field of development. Several delegations expressed the view that the programme should duly reflect the integrated approach as contained in Agenda 21.

66. A number of delegations considered that the objectives were too general and should have been defined more precisely so that they could be measured at the end of the plan period.

67. Some delegations were of the view that the role of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development with regard to the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its link with the Economic and Social Council should have been highlighted in the programme. Other delegations expressed concern that there was no reference to cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions.

68. Several delegations noted the absence of references to countries with economies in transition and the least developed countries in the narrative of the programme.

69. A number of delegations noted that references were made to 'civil society', 'non-state actors', and 'new global actors' and expressed the view that, while seeking their involvement could be a positive development, it should be considered only as a complement to the role of Governments.

70. A number of delegations recalled the observation of the Commission on Sustainable Development that small island developing States are among the most environmentally vulnerable. They also underscored the need for special priority to be accorded the situation and needs of those countries, including through access to grants and other concessional resources, and called for the provision of adequate human and financial resources to be allocated to the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to facilitate the effective follow-up to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

71. One delegation indicated that it did not agree with the structure and the narrative proposed for the programme. That delegation considered that the new structure should consist of three programmes, as follows:

(a) A programme entitled 'Overall issues and policies, including coordination', which would include the subprogrammes of the current programme 11;

(b) A programme entitled 'Global social issues and policies', which would include two subprogrammes: subprogramme 1, Advancement of women, and subprogramme 2, Social development and integration;

(c) A programme entitled 'Sustainable development'.

72. One delegation indicated that the responsibility of sustained economic growth and sustainable development should not be limited to the Commission on Sustainable Development, and that other relevant bodies, including the United Nations Environment Programme, should be involved.

73. One delegation proposed replacing the words "to monitor" with the words "to follow up", in paragraphs 5.7 (a) and 5.11 (c), and to replace the words "To improve the monitoring" with the words "To improve the follow-up", in paragraph 5.7 (b).

Conclusions and recommendations

74. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 5 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 5.3:

(i) In the first sentence, replace the words "to develop agreed standards, policies and programmes on issues arising from globalization of environmental and social problems and from the marginalization of certain disadvantaged groups" by the words "to promote an effective exchange of information and to provide follow-up to agreed standards, policies and programmes that emerge from intergovernmental decisions";

(ii) In the second sentence, delete the words "new global actors, for example";

(b) Paragraph 5.4 (e):

(i) Replace the word "Strengthened" by the word "Facilitated";

(ii) Add the words "that emerge from intergovernmental decisions" after the words "civil society";

(iii) Replace the word "including" by the word "especially";

(c) Paragraph 5.5 (c): Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"To increase the Organization's capacity to serve as a focal point for the non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and to improve coordination of non-governmental organization activities, in accordance with the procedures of the United Nations, so as to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity; and to enhance opportunities to facilitate participation of relevant elements of civil society in the activities of intergovernmental bodies, in accordance with the decisions of those bodies";

(d) Paragraph 5.5 (d):

(i) In the first sentence, replace the word "reform" by the word "restructuring";

(ii) Add the words "as may be appropriate" at the end of the paragraph;

(e) Paragraph 5.5 (e): After the words "central intergovernmental bodies and" add the words "to promote the implementation of the decisions taken by";

(f) Paragraph 5.7 (c):

(i) Add a reference to coordination and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action;

(ii) Add a reference to coordination with the Centre for Human Rights and its relevant mechanisms such as the Special Rapporteur on violence against women;

(g) Paragraph 5.7 (e): Add a reference to Governments;

(h) Paragraph 5.9 (a): Replace the first sentence by the following text: "To promote the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action";

(i) Paragraph 5.9 (b):

(i) Add the words "the International Year of the Family (1994)" after the words "the Year 2000 and Beyond";

(ii) In the last sentence, add the words "as well as families" after the word "groups";

(j) Paragraph 5.9 (c): Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"To strengthen participation and cooperation among all actors concerned with social development, as well as promotion of actions addressed to accomplish the priorities of national programmes and internationally agreed norms";

(k) Paragraph 5.9: Add a new subparagraph, to read as follows:

"(d) The Department will draw upon the decision taken by the Commission for Social Development regarding the multi-year programme of work on the follow-up to the Social Summit";

(l) Paragraph 5.10: At the end of the paragraph, delete the words "and will increase interaction to that end with actors of civil society";

(m) Insert a new paragraph 5.11, reading as follows:

"The implementation of these activities would be done without prejudice to the role of the Secretariat as stated in other relevant programmes of the medium-term plan dealing with environment";

(n) Old paragraph 5.11 (b):

(i) In the first sentence, delete the words "for instance, consumption and production patterns as an umbrella concept encompassing environmental and economic factors";

(ii) The third sentence should be a separate subparagraph (c) and the remaining subparagraphs relettered accordingly;

(o) Old paragraph 5.11 (d): In the first sentence, after the word "implementing", add the words "the economic, social and environmental aspects of";

(p) Old paragraph 5.11: Add a new subparagraph, to read as follows:

"(f) In its work programme, the Division will give the necessary attention to the economic and social dimensions of sustainability. It will also draw up specific programmes as follow-up to the decisions taken in Agenda 21 and the Commission on Sustainable Development regarding the provision of adequate and predictable new and additional financial resources to developing countries, and mechanisms for the transfer of technology to those countries, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed in paragraph 34.14 (b) of Agenda 21".

Programme 6. Africa: New Agenda for Development

75. At its 26th and 28th meetings, on 19 and 20 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 6, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 6)).

Discussion

76. Several delegations welcomed the presentation of the programme. Many delegations reaffirmed the priority assigned to Africa by the General Assembly. They considered that, while African countries were responsible for the economic recovery and development of Africa, it was also essential that the international community fulfil its commitments, in particular as regards increased financial flows towards the continent.

77. Several delegations emphasized that the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in 1990s, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, remained a basic mandate for African economic and social development and that other action programmes such as the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa translated the New Agenda into action in operational terms. They therefore welcomed the outcomes of the conferences held in Tokyo and Bandung, which had offered good opportunities to mobilize the efforts of the international community in favour of the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa. Several delegations expressed the position that the Cairo Agenda for Action adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in March 1995, which had been taken note of by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/160 of 22 December 1995, should be listed among the mandates and action programmes on African development referred to in the programme narrative. One delegation was of the view that the programme should provide a clearer indication of how it would complement or support the conclusions and recommendations made in the programmes of action from the recent major United Nations conferences, several of which contained subchapters devoted to Africa on issues also identified in the New Agenda for the Development of Africa.

78. A number of delegations were of the view that the commitments of the international community towards African economic recovery and development contained in the New Agenda and the programme priorities were not adequately reflected in the programme narrative. Others considered that the programme had an imbalanced focus on international community efforts and did not adequately address how the programme would support or encourage national efforts of African States. Some delegations were of the view that the objectives at subprogramme level should have put more emphasis on the Special Initiative on Africa. Some delegations considered that the narrative should highlight the causes of the

limited progress made so far in the implementation of the New Agenda and the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in Africa. One delegation indicated that the Programme should specify how progress made or success achieved would be measured and assessed and suggested that performance indicators or benchmarks should be incorporated into each of the subprogrammes for that purpose.

79. Several delegations indicated that the major cause for failure in the implementation of action programmes on African development was the lack of financial resources and they proposed that that aspect be reflected in the programme narrative. Some delegations were of the view that the issues of mobilization of financial resources, transfer of technology and external debt should be highlighted in the programme narrative as central issues in the implementation of the New Agenda during the period covered by the plan. Several delegations emphasized that coordination with OAU at the policy level and with the Bretton Woods institutions at the operational level should be enhanced in order to ensure the effective implementation of the New Agenda.

80. Several delegations noted with satisfaction the activities of the Department of Public Information in promoting awareness of the African critical economic situation and the measures undertaken by the United Nations system and the international community for the development of Africa. A number of delegations considered that the Department's activities should focus more on target groups such as the donor community and highlight the activities at the regional and country levels in both Africa and other regions. They also considered that some feedback procedures should be established. Several delegations were of the view that more information should be disseminated on success stories and efforts undertaken by African countries themselves in order to promote a positive image of African national and regional efforts.

Conclusions and recommendations

81. The Committee recommended approval of programme 6 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, subject to the addition at the end of paragraph 6.2 of the following text:

> "Furthermore, the document entitled 'Relaunching Africa's economic and social development: the Cairo Agenda for Action', taken note of by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/160 of 22 December 1995, not only focused on what Africa could do for itself, but also reaffirmed the invaluable contribution the international community could make to Africa's recovery and development."

Programme 7. Economic and social information and policy analysis

82. At its 25th meeting, on 19 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 7, Economic and social information and policy analysis, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 7)).

Discussion

83. Many delegations stressed the importance of this programme, particularly in the areas of statistics and population, and supported the objectives of the

plan. One delegation queried the added value of the activities of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis in these areas.

84. Some delegations expressed the view that the objectives were ambitious, while others felt that the objectives did not lend themselves to measurement. Several delegations stressed the need to ensure that adequate coordination or cooperation, as appropriate, were maintained between the programme and other United Nations organs and/or agencies, such as the regional economic commissions, the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in order to avoid duplication of work and to ensure the effective use of the scarce available resources.

85. Some delegations expressed the view that the programme should also address the question of a non-discriminatory trade system and transfer of technology, as well as the external debt situation.

86. Several delegations stressed that issues relative to countries with economies in transition should be properly reflected in the plan, including refugees and displaced persons, migration and housing, and the study of market solutions to problems of allocation, distribution and regulation.

87. Several delegations stressed the importance of addressing the question of the impact of multilateral sanctions and of coercive economic measures on both target countries and third States. Other delegations had reservations as to whether the end of the cold war gave a new focus to the interactions between the political and economic dimensions of the Secretariat's work on issues such as the effects of sanctions. Others questioned whether the provision of economic and social analysis and policy proposals regarding post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of crisis-stricken areas should be included in the programme. A number of delegations stressed that the question of the impact of the coercive economic measures applied unilaterally by some countries should also be addressed by the programme.

88. One delegation pointed out that subprogramme 7.3 should have been presented as a separate programme entitled "Global development issues and policies", with the following subprogrammes:

1. Monitoring and assessment of current global economic issues and policies

2. Promotion of development and international economic cooperation

3. Problems and prospects of integrated development

4. External debt and financing of development

5. System-wide analysis of specific areas within the economic and social programmes

6. Planning and coordination of international cooperation (including country programming)

7. Development and the environment

89. Some delegations stated that subprogramme 7.2 should consider the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in its entirety, and that there was a need to implement the 16 chapters of the Programme of Action in an integrated and comprehensive manner. In that connection, the actual provision of financial resources pledged by developed countries played a critical role. In that respect, the subprogramme could also undertake an overall assessment of the resources needed for the implementation of the Programme of Action. Moreover, the subprogramme was focused mainly on the provision of information. While recognizing the importance of information for formulating population policies, those delegations stressed that action-oriented recommendations with regard to population and development aimed at supporting national efforts, needs and policies were indispensable.

Conclusions and recommendations

90. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 7 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 7.2: Add the words "the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)" after the words "Fourth World Conference on Women";

(b) Paragraph 7.3 (b): Add the words "reliability, consistency" after the word "compilation";

(c) Paragraph 7.4 (a): At the end of the third sentence, add the words "to reinforce the United Nations role as a centre of excellence in statistics";

(d) Paragraph 7.7 (d): In the first sentence, delete the word "Rapidly" and insert the words "as well as the aging of population" after the words "international migration";

(e) Paragraph 7.10 (c): In the third sentence, delete the words "which forms part of the Organization's broader effort to arrest and mitigate the consequences of fragmentation within countries".

Programme 8. Development support and management services

91. At its 27th meeting, on 20 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 8, Development support and management services, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 8)).

Discussion

92. A number of delegations supported the proposed programme of work and emphasized the importance of activities geared towards developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Some delegations stressed the need to avoid duplication between this programme and the work programmes of other United Nations organizations and considered that the programme should focus on the activities in which it has a comparative advantage.

93. Some delegations observed that they could find little in the programme that did not duplicate work being undertaken elsewhere and questioned whether the

Department for Development Support and Management Services should exist at all. Other delegations expressed strong support for the work of the Department.

94. A number of delegations expressed the view that all the provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/225 of 19 April 1996 on public administration and development should be reflected in subprogramme 8.1.

95. One delegation asked about the budgetary implications of the proposal in paragraph 8.6 (a) of the proposed medium-term plan to set up a clearing-house mechanism in the area of public administration.

96. A number of delegations questioned the mandate for post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Other delegations supported the focus in that area, which in their view, was in conformity with General Assembly resolution 50/225.

97. Some delegations felt that the lack of financial and technological resources, information and expertise, as well as the debt crisis and unemployment, should be mentioned in subprogramme 8.2 as factors that pose a threat to the environment and social development.

98. Several delegations expressed the view that subprogramme 8.2 should indicate that poverty eradication is a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development and is an overriding priority for developing countries. Some delegations considered that poverty eradication is important, but it is not the only prerequisite for sustainable development.

99. Some delegations questioned the need for mandates for the promotion of surveying and mapping techniques, as indicated in paragraph 8.8 (d). Other delegations considered that those activities were important and that assistance in that area should be provided also at the regional and subregional levels.

100. Several delegations noted that subprogramme 8.1 should include a statement regarding the role of the State in redressing economic and social injustices.

101. Some delegations were of the view that the objectives of subprogramme 8.1 should not go beyond what has been agreed upon in the context of General Assembly resolution 50/225. The clearing-house mechanism and participation of major groups should be in full conformity with the provisions of that resolution as well as with the practices and procedures of the United Nations. Furthermore, the provisions of the resolution should be taken fully into account and implemented in a comprehensive and integrated manner, comprising all the necessary elements at the national and international levels, particularly those related to technology transfer, financial resources and enabling international economic environment through new initiatives for strengthening institutional capacity for enhancing international development cooperation. All the impediments to sustainable development, particularly in the developing countries, should be adequately addressed. The elements indicated in paragraph 8.7 are not dealing with all the necessary factors. The problem should be tackled at the national and international levels, including the need for an enabling international economic environment conducive to development.

102. One delegation proposed that paragraph 8.1 be redrafted as follows:

> "The general purpose of the programme, of which the Department for Development Support and Management Services is in charge, is, in the first place, to promote and create a favourable climate for development in every

country, particularly in the developing countries and the least developed among them, as well as in the countries with economies in transition. Thus, it should improve and support, by means of technical cooperation, the activities of Member States aimed at strengthening their administrative and financial systems for development, consolidating institutional capabilities and infrastructures and implementing economic and social policies, according to their national development priorities, so as to contribute to sustainable development, concentrating on the needs of the population and the eradication of poverty. To that effect, the programme makes available to the developing countries and those with economies in transition, technical know-how and personnel specialized in the fields of public administration and finance, economic and social policy and planning, as well as the planning and management of natural and energy resources."

The same delegation proposed that the title of subprogramme 8.1 should be "Public administration, finance and development management".

Conclusions and recommendations

103. The Committee recommended approval of programme 8 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 8.2: In the last sentence, after the word "support" add the words "as requested by interested Governments";

(b) Paragraph 8.5: Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"During the past years, several factors have had an impact on the evolution of public administration, among them, technological advances, the fast rate and interdependence of political, social and economic world changes and their consequences for all countries, particularly the developing ones. In the light of this new world situation, it is necessary to improve the efficiency of public institutions and administrative procedures, and to establish rational financial management to face those changes and to support sustainable development in every country";

(c) Paragraphs 8.6 (c) and (d): [Does not apply to English text];

(d) Paragraph 8.6 (c): Replace the words "managing development programmes" with the words "improving the management of development programmes";

(e) Paragraph 8.6 (d): Replace the words "ensuring the maintenance of essential basic government services and functions during times of crisis and developing strategies for rebuilding a viable public administration in countries undergoing post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction" with the words "elaborating strategies, at the request of interested countries, for the reconstruction of a viable public administration in the countries that are undergoing rehabilitation and reconstruction once a conflict is over";

(f) Paragraph 8.7:

(i) Replace the third sentence with the following text: "It may mean changing consumption patterns to increase the use of products, and production and consumption processes that have the least adverse impact on the global environment, taking into account the requirements and environmental concerns of developing countries";

(ii) Replace the last sentence with the following: "At the request of interested Governments, and according to their priorities, the Secretariat will cooperate in the definition of needs and the formulation of policies so as to tackle simultaneously poverty, degradation of resources and the needs of reconstruction once a conflict is over";

(g) Paragraph 8.8: Replace the second sentence with the following:

"The objectives of the subprogramme are to assist Governments and communities at the request of their respective Governments, as follows";

(h) Paragraph 8.8 (b): Insert the word "all" before the words "vulnerable groups" and delete the words "such as ethnic minorities, women, youth and the elderly, especially in the context of post-conflict and post-disaster rehabilitation";

(i) Paragraph 8.8 (e): Delete the words "to different levels of government, civil society, community institutions and entrepreneurs".

Programme 9. Trade and development

104. At its 33rd meeting, on 25 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 9, Trade and development, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 9)).

Discussion

105. Several delegations expressed their support for the programme and welcomed the efforts at presenting a simplified programme of work. A number of delegations considered that some activities such as debt, poverty alleviation and economic cooperation among developing countries should have been emphasized. Some delegations expressed the views that the programme should reflect the agreements reached at the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

106. Several delegations were of the view that the amendments to programme 9 adopted by the UNCTAD Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget should be endorsed by the Committee.

107. Some delegations stressed the importance of the work of UNCTAD related to land-locked developing countries and small island developing States. A number of delegations considered that the reference to land-locked developing countries under subprogramme 9.4 was not appropriate and that, in accordance with the agreement reached at the ninth session of UNCTAD, that reference should be more appropriately included under subprogramme 9.5.

108. Some delegations were of the view that subprogramme 9.5 should have not been included since there was no agreement on it at the ninth session of UNCTAD.

109. Some delegations stressed that the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States should be referred to in all subprogrammes.

110. Several delegations demanded to use the agreed terminology "countries with economies in transition", instead of "countries in transition" in paragraphs 9.7 (d), 9.13 (c) and 9.19 (a).

Conclusions and recommendations

111. The Committee for Programme and Coordination was informed of the amendments proposed by the Trade and Development Board's Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget during its twenty-seventh session, held at Geneva, on 17 June 1996. The Committee requested the Secretary-General to submit a version of programme 9 revised in the light of the results of UNCTAD IX as well as of the decisions that may be adopted by the Board at its forty-third regular session, to be held at Geneva from 7 to 18 October 1996, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

Programme 10. Environment

112. At its 27th and 28th meetings, on 20 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 10, Environment, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 10)).

Discussion

113. Many delegations attached importance to the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and noted with satisfaction the proposed structure of the programme. Several delegations commended the introduction of performance indicators and encouraged their full utilization.

114. Several delegations emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration with other bodies and organizations of the United Nations system with a view to eliminating duplication. In that regard, some delegations called for greater efforts to be made to further strengthen coordination, with, among others, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNCTAD, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and regional commissions and conventions, particularly in the areas of freshwater, energy, capacity-building, trade, education, etc. in order to avoid duplication of work.

115. Some delegations expressed concern that, in view of the fact that water was a potential source of regional and international conflicts, the proposed plan did not reflect any initiative by way of early warning. Other delegations were of the view that such assumptions were speculative in nature and did not fall within the purview of programme 10. Concern was also expressed about the omission of reference to the regional seas programme and the protection of rivers and deltas. One delegation was of the view that the plan should avoid reference to specific and fragmented references to resources.

116. Some delegations felt that the problem of desertification and dry land degradation was not given adequate treatment. Some delegations called for attention to be given to threats caused by degradation of coastal areas. Some

delegations underlined the difficult situation and the special needs and requirements of developing countries as a result of environmental degradation and emphasized the need for international support to deal with those problems through projects prepared and implemented by UNEP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other relevant organizations. A number of delegations said that no special window existed in GEF for such projects. The discipline of the four focal areas of GEF should be maintained.

117. Some delegations stated that they attached importance to the transfer of environmentally sound technology and emphasized the need for greater efforts to be made in that regard.

118. One delegation called for efforts to be made to explore possibilities for the funding of environmentally sustainable development through resource allocation instead of the current dependence on the temporary mobilization of resources.

119. Some delegations considered that the dialogue on sustainable consumption and production patterns should also include developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

120. Some delegations underscored the importance of enhanced public awareness about environmental problems and concerns and emphasized the need for the involvement of civil society, particularly at the educational and family levels, in the protection of the environment.

121. Several delegations were of the view that the programme should also be focused on developing the international environmental law. Other delegations said such development was a function of Governments.

Conclusions and recommendations

122. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 10 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 10.1: After "UNEP", insert the words "in coordination with other relevant United Nations agencies and international organizations, as appropriate,";

(b) Paragraph 10.4 (a): Replace the words "environmental threats" with the words "threats of environmental degradation";

(c) Paragraph 10.6: In the third sentence, delete the words "and may cause international conflicts over water rights";

(d) Paragraph 10.7: After the words "Land-based Activities", insert the words "in the framework of the regional seas programme";

(e) Paragraph 10.9:

(i) Delete the words "including transboundary ecosystems";

(ii) Before the words "strengthen the capacity of Governments" add the words "to work with UNDP to";

(f) Paragraph 10.11: Replace the last part of the paragraph after the word "Africa" with the following: "and assist in the preparation of projects in the area of land degradation";

(g) Paragraphs 10.14 and 10.23: Replace the words "countries in transition" and "transitional economy countries" with the words "countries with economies in transition";

(h) Paragraph 10.18: Replace the first part of the first sentence up to the words "human health" with the following:

"The use of chemicals is essential to protect public health and increase food production, but unregulated use of toxic chemicals or uncontrolled disposal of hazardous wastes threaten the environment and human health"

In the second sentence, before the words "monitor and assess global trends" insert the words "through the work of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal,";

(i) Paragraph 10.20:

(i) In the fourth sentence, delete the second part of the sentence, beginning with the words "as well as to derive";

(ii) Delete the final words of the paragraph "and to mitigate the effects of environmental change and emergencies". UNEP cannot do so by itself. It can only support countries' efforts to do so under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This idea is already covered in the final phrase in paragraph 10.15;

(j) Paragraph 10.24:

(i) In the second sentence, after the words "international and national laws have evolved", insert the words "to give expression to the policy decisions of Governments";

(ii) In the last sentence, replace the words "aiming at development" with the words "in support of sustainable development".

Programme 11. Human settlements

123. At its 32nd and 33rd meetings, on 24 and 25 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 11, Human settlements, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 11)).

Discussion

124. Several delegations suggested that the draft programme should be updated in accordance with the outcome of the recently concluded second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). In that connection, a number of delegations underlined that the main theme of the programme should focus on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, thereby reinforcing the mandate of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

125. A number of delegations pointed out that, in line with the outcome of Habitat II, the three subprogrammes should place adequate emphasis on the needs of developing countries in general and those countries in Africa region and the least developed countries in particular.

126. Some delegations felt that the draft programme should have reflected appropriate balance between rural and urban settlements.

127. Several delegations were of the view that the draft programme should have used agreed concepts and they called for the redrafting of paragraph 11.5 so as to underpin the idea that human beings are the centre of development.

128. Some delegations noted that account should have been taken of the needs of youth and their access to credit facilities.

129. A number of delegations were of the view that references to concepts such as democracy, peace and equity that appear in different parts of the document should find their appropriate place in the Perspective document (A/51/6 (Perspective)).

130. Some delegations expressed concern that the objectives of the programme were too general and that it would be impossible to measure its implementation. Other delegations felt that the draft programme was too ambitious and required considerable resources that might not be forthcoming. In that regard, a number of delegations wished emphasis to be placed on the need for the transfer of know-how and resources through international cooperation.

Conclusions and recommendations

131. In view of the adoption of the Habitat Agenda at Habitat II, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the programme be revised to reflect the consensus reached at the Conference and that it be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-first session for approval.

Programme 12. Crime prevention and criminal justice

132. At its 23rd and 24th meetings, on 18 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 12, Crime prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 12)).

Discussion

133. A number of delegations supported the general direction of the programme.

134. Several delegations requested information as to the efforts and nature of the coordination of activities with other United Nations organs and/or agencies, principally the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Some delegations emphasized that coordination needed to be improved, in particular with UNDCP, for example on money laundering.

135. Several delegations stressed that the treatment of victims and the treatment of offenders should not be put on an equal footing. Other delegations were concerned with the lack of mandates and the lack of an agreed

definition of the concept of "good governance" and requested its deletion from the text. Another delegation stressed the importance of the study of the multisectoral root of crime.

136. Some delegations were concerned that countries with economies in transition were not properly equipped to deal with the new forms of crime, in particular transnational crime, and stressed the need for assistance to those countries.

137. Several delegations expressed doubt that a common concept of organized transnational crime could be developed. Some delegations expressed concern that the question of terrorism had not been adequately addressed and indicated that this should be remedied. One delegation stressed the need for the question of the regulation of firearms to be addressed in the plan.

138. Some delegations did not think the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division made effective use of the resources it had. They noted that efficiency should be improved before additional resources were contemplated.

Conclusions and recommendations

139. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 12 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 12.1: In the last sentence, replace the word "transfer" with the word "disseminate";

(b) Paragraph 12.3 (a): In the first sentence, delete the words "good governance and";

(c) Paragraph 12.3 (b):

(i) In the first sentence, replace the words "To strengthen the capacity of Governments to reform" with the words "To support the strengthening of the capacity of Governments, at their request, to improve";

(ii) Insert the following sentence after the first sentence: "Due attention will be given to firearms regulation measures in accordance with current national legislation and appropriate United Nations legislative mandates";

(d) Paragraph 12.3 (c):

(i) In the first sentence, after the word "terrorism" add the words "in all its forms and manifestations";

(ii) In the first sentence, replace the words "and environmental offences" with the words "environmental offences and illicit traffic in children";

(iii) At the end of the last sentence, add the words "taking into account the growing dangers of links between organized transnational crime, terrorist crimes and drug trafficking".

Programme 13. International drug control

140. At its 23rd meeting, on 18 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 13, International drug control, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 13)).

Discussion

141. Many delegations expressed their support and agreement with the general orientation and overall strategy of the programme. Some delegations noted the absence of reference to transit countries and the lack of balance regarding those countries together with producer and demand countries.

142. Some delegations expressed the view that an integrated approach to illicit drug trafficking should be undertaken at the subregional, regional and international levels and that cooperation agreements should apply not only at the subregional but also at the regional level. Other delegations emphasized the importance of implementation of legislation based on the conventions on international drug control.

143. Some delegations emphasized the importance of international cooperation and technical assistance and advice for developing countries, especially on crop substitution programmes in producing countries.

144. Some delegations expressed the view that the causes for the proliferation of illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse enumerated in paragraph 13.1 had not been fully highlighted and were therefore selective.

145. Several delegations expressed the view that use of the terms 'eradication of illicit crops' and 'elimination of illicit crops' gave rise to inconsistencies. Several delegations noted the absence of the link between drug abuse and poverty and one delegation noted the absence of the link between crime and drugs.

146. Some delegations stressed that more emphasis should be placed on demand reduction. Some delegations noted the coordination efforts between UNDCP and the Committee for Programme and Coordination and stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between UNDCP and the regional commissions.

147. Several delegations expressed support for efforts to strengthen national capabilities and institutions, particularly to those Governments that had demonstrated commitment to drug control.

Conclusions and recommendations

148. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 13 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 13.3: In the first sentence, insert the word 'accepted' before the word 'international';

(b) Paragraph 13.4: Replace the first sentence with the following:

"Drawing from the Fund of the Programme, technical advice and assistance will be provided at the request of Governments in support of efforts at the national level towards a balanced approach to drug abuse control targeting both illicit supply and demand, as well as the situation of the illicit trafficking";

(c) Paragraph 13.5:

(i) In the first sentence, after the words "to fight drug abuse and" add the words "all aspects of production";

(ii) In the second sentence, replace the words "proven intervention methodologies" with the words "effective methodologies in tackling drug abuse";

(d) Paragraph 13.6 (b): Replace the second sentence with the following:

"Needs and opportunities for multilateral cooperation in drug control at the regional and subregional levels will be identified and concrete cooperation arrangements promoted through advocacy and technical support";

(e) Paragraph 13.7 (c): Insert the words "To support the International Narcotics Control Board" at the beginning of the paragraph;

(f) Paragraph 13.8 (b): In the third sentence, replace the word "and" after the word "development" by a comma, and replace the word "including" with the word "and";

(g) Paragraph 13.8 (c): At the beginning of the paragraph, replace the words "To increase" by the words "To support Governments in increasing";

(h) Paragraph 13.8 (e): At the beginning of the paragraph, replace the words "To increase" with the words "To support Governments in increasing";

(i) Paragraph 13.8 (e): Replace the second sentence with the following:

"To that end, in certain subregions, coordination of bilateral and multilateral technical assistance to combat illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors will be improved, taking into account national priorities and in a continuous dialogue with the competent national authorities".

Programme 14. Economic and social development in Africa

149. At its 29th meeting, on 21 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 14, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 14)).

Discussion

150. While welcoming the renewal process in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and taking note of the efforts at reform, a number of delegations were convinced that it was necessary to pay more attention to the need for more pragmatism and improvement in order to produce a proposed plan containing concrete and significant action aimed at addressing the real needs of Africa. The commendable efforts of the new Executive Secretary towards reform needed to

be developed into a programme related to the staff and financial resources available to ECA and responding to the actual needs of African countries.

151. Several delegations noted that the objectives were not precise and expressed the view that the proposed programme could have placed more emphasis on measurable outcomes. Many very important sectors were left out. In addition, there were no activities aimed specifically at bringing about real improvement in international cooperation in favour of the development and recovery of Africa.

152. With regard to the role of ECA in the fight against poverty, as indicated in paragraph 14.7 (d) of the proposed programme, some delegations stated that excellence in this area was to be found not in outlining what was and was not working, but in assessing the underlying causes of poverty. In that regard, a number of delegations called for more tangible efforts.

153. A number of delegations expressed concern that the proposed programme did not give adequate treatment to certain important programme activities such as, in particular, those relating to trade, external debt, the fight against AIDS, crime prevention, international aid for development and gender issues.

154. Some delegations considered that the role of men should also be highlighted in paragraph 14.14.

Conclusions and recommendations

155. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 14 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modification, taking into account the results of the process of internal restructuring currently under way in ECA: in paragraph 14.7 (d), replace the words "by indicating what is and is not working" with "by analysing the causes of success and failures noted".

Programme 15. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

156. At its 30th meeting, on 21 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 15, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 15)).

Discussion

157. A number of delegations expressed their support for, and agreement with, the contents of the proposed medium-term plan. They considered that the trends in the region had been well reflected. Some delegations welcomed the focus on the three major themes of regional economic cooperation, environment and sustainable development, and poverty alleviation through economic growth, which are priorities that were highlighted at the World Summit for Social Development. Other delegations regretted the absence of any means by which the success or otherwise of the programme could be measured. Some delegations also stated that the programme would need to be revised in view of the comprehensive review of the intergovernmental and secretariat structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to be conducted in April 1997.

158. Some delegations expressed support for the objective related to enhancing regional cooperation in space technology applications and strengthening national capacities in the applications of remote sensing, the Geographical Information System (GIS) and other spatial information technologies, as well as for the objective of promoting the development of interregional and intraregional transport linkages to enhance international trade and tourism.

159. A number of delegations considered that greater emphasis should be put on the active integration process in the region and its effect on the region as a whole. Furthermore, the subprogrammes should focus on subregional and intraregional cooperation in a number of areas. Some delegations suggested that the role of ESCAP in strengthening South-South cooperation, particularly with regard to transfer of technology and expertise, should be highlighted.

160. A number of delegations were of the view that ESCAP should play an important role with regard to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, in particular by assisting countries and strengthening existing machineries on desertification, as well as in energy matters such as substitution of fossil sources of energy.

161. With regard to subprogramme 15.1, some delegations considered that ESCAP should focus on the activities for which it has a comparative advantage and that other activities should be coordinated at the global rather than the regional level. The regional commissions were not therefore the most appropriate bodies to undertake such activities. Overall, these delegations observed that duplication must be avoided and that ESCAP should not undertake work that prejudged ongoing intergovernmental negotiations.

162. Some delegations questioned the need for further work on technology transfer under subprogramme 15.3. UNCTAD had already completed a comprehensive body of work on that issue. The subprogramme should therefore be deleted.

163. Some delegations suggested that subprogramme 15.3 be deleted.

164. Some delegations considered that, in regard to subprogrammes 15.1, 15.2 and 15.3, since Asia and the Pacific was one of the regions with the highest economic growth rate and a number of countries in that region were newly industrialized countries, therefore in the context of South-South cooperation, ESCAP could plan a greater role for enhancing cooperation in the region in terms of technology transfer, know-how, investment and exchange of information, experiences and expertise.

165. Some delegations expressed the view that since Asia was one of the regions most affected by desertification and drought, particular attention should be paid to that matter. The existing machinery and activities of ESCAP dealing with that issue, such as activities under the programme of the network of desertification control in Asia and the Pacific, should be strengthened. It was also stated that ESCAP could play a central role in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Desertification, particularly its annex on Asia.

166. Some delegations expressed the opinion that with regard to energy, ESCAP could also support the activities of its members at the subregional level concerning the substitution of fossil fuel by lower pollutant sources of energy such as natural gas. However, activities in this field should take into account the interests of all countries in the region.

167. One delegation considered that developing a transport system in Asia and the Pacific was critical not only to markets but also for the expansion of trade in, and economic and social development of the region. Therefore, the current activities of ESCAP in this area should continue. Better cooperation and coordination between ESCAP and other relevant bodies, UNCTAD in particular, would contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes. Financial and technological support for the endeavours of both land-locked and transit-developing countries should constitute the priority for ESCAP activities in the field of transportation.

168. One delegation expressed concern that the proposed medium-term plan did not reflect reforms under way in ESCAP, such as those regarding the role of the Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development, and the role of the subprogramme for economic cooperation.

Conclusions and recommendations

169. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 15 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, taking into account the results of the process of internal restructuring currently under way in ESCAP.

Programme 16. Economic development in Europe

170. At its 24th meeting, on 18 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 16, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 16)).

Discussion

171. Many delegations supported the programme. Some delegations welcomed the review process currently under way in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and noted that the proposed medium-term plan would have to be revised to take into account the results of the review. They supported cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Some delegations stressed the need to ensure that the programme focus on areas in which ECE has expertise and a clear comparative advantage and avoid duplication with other European institutions and other bodies of the United Nations system. Some delegations emphasized that ECE should continue to work under a purely economic mandate.

172. Several delegations expressed the view that the subprogramme on environment should have been more specific and address issues relating to the pollution of the Danube and its delta and to the risk of nuclear plants pollution.

173. A number of delegations stressed the importance of the work of ECE in areas such as industry and technology, international trade and human settlements, and regional and subregional economic cooperation, including in the Black Sea area. Other delegations observed that only environment, transport, statistics and trade facilitation should remain as priority areas. They believed that work in other non-priority areas could be discontinued.

174. One delegation expressed concern that the proposed medium-term plan poorly reflects the ongoing ECE priority-setting exercise, as well as concern that some ECE analytical work duplicates that of the OECD.

Conclusions and recommendations

175. The Committee takes note of the fact that the priorities of ECE in the proposed medium-term plan are transport, environment, statistics, economic analysis and trade facilitation.

176. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 16 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications, taking into account the results of the process of internal restructuring currently under way in ECE:

(a) Paragraph 16.6 (a): Replace the paragraph with the following text:

"To provide policy direction for the ECE region, in particular by furthering cooperative processes; extending national environmental performance reviews to the entire ECE region; and reporting the development of international environmental law, taking into special account the priority needs of the countries with economies in transition";

(b) Paragraph 16.6 (b): Delete the words "adopt a strategic environmental policy";

(c) Paragraph 16.6 (d): Replace the words "To develop international environmental law" with the words "To facilitate the development of environmental law";

(d) Paragraph 16.6 (e):

(i) At the end of the paragraph, replace the words "to exchange technology and expertise; and to mobilize increased resources" with the words "to exchange expertise and to mobilize increased resources for the implementation of regional environmental legislation";

(ii) Replace the words "countries in transition" with the words "countries with economies in transition";

(e) Paragraph 16.9: Replace the third sentence with the following: "To that end, the third objective is to continue the work and activities decided at the 1996 Regional Conference on Transport and Environment, as well as to assist in formulating further responses to that challenge";

(f) Paragraph 16.13 (a): Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "Expertise will be provided to the countries with economies in transition in this field, upon their request";

(g) Paragraph 16.14: In the first sentence, replace the words "member Governments" by the words "some member Governments";

(h) Paragraph 16.23: In the first sentence, replace the word "adopting" by the word "developing".

Programme 17. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

177. At its 29th meeting on 21 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 17, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 17)).

Discussion

178. Many delegations stressed the importance of the programme, particularly in the areas of analysis of economic and social issues and in technical assistance activities, and supported the objectives of the plan. One delegation said the programme was very wide-ranging and questioned whether all the activities represented areas in which the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) had a comparative advantage.

179. Some delegations were concerned that the overall objective of the programme as stated in the plan had moved away from focusing on the achievement of sustained economic growth in the region. Other delegations felt that the objectives did not lend themselves to measurement. Some delegations expressed the desire for a better balance between analytical and technical assistance activities. Other delegations stressed the need to ensure that adequate coordination be maintained between that programme and other United Nations organs and/or agencies, in particular other economic commissions, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, UNCTAD, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Caribbean development organizations, in order to avoid duplication of work.

180. Some delegations were concerned that the subject of foreign indebtedness and its impact in the economies of the region was not appropriately emphasized in the proposed plan as it had been in the previous plan. Other delegations echoed the same concern with regard to the issues of scientific development, food and agriculture, as well as training and technical cooperation programmes in the area of demographics and social development. One delegation was concerned that the proposed plan did not reflect an adequate level of emphasis on issues related to the Caribbean subregion and to sustainable development in smaller nations within the overall scope of ECLAC subprogrammes.

181. Several delegations questioned the definition of strategic administration in subprogramme 17.6 and its distinction from the concepts of public administration and governance. Other delegations questioned the link between intraregional trade and environmental and employment conditions in subprogramme 17.2, as well as the nature of the contribution that transnational corporations could make to the economic development of the region's countries.

182. One delegation stressed the need of studying capital flows in addition to trade flows under subprogramme 17.2. Other delegations were interested in furthering the study of issues related to the economic impact caused by the production and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, such as crop substitution. The need to coordinate activities in that area with UNDCP was also stressed.

183. One delegation expressed concern that the current medium-term plan did not reflect current priority-setting exercises in ECLAC.

Conclusions and recommendations

184. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 17 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 with the following modifications, taking into account the result of the process of restructuring currently under way in ECLAC:

(a) Paragraph 17.1: In the first sentence, replace the words "to contribute to the development of" with the words "to promote the economic and social development of";

(b) Paragraph 17.5 (a): Add the following at the end of the paragraph: "and to provide support to the States of the region in their efforts to maximize the benefits and minimize the pitfalls of these global trends.";

(c) Paragraph 17.6: In the second sentence, insert the words "and the Caribbean" after the words "Latin America";

(d) Paragraph 17.7 (a):

(i) After the words "Latin American" insert the words "and Caribbean" (in both cases);

(ii) In the first sentence, after the word "future", add the following: "and to provide support at the operational level to States of the region in their efforts to address these problems.";

(iii) Replace the word "rechannelling" with the word "reorienting";

(iv) Replace the words "flows as a result of formal agreements" with the words "and capital flows as a result of the formal agreement mentioned above";

(v) Replace the words "to establish free trade zones." with the words "to promote economic integration in the region";

(e) Paragraph 17.7 (b): In the second sentence, after the words "the second objective is to" insert the words "provide Member States and subregional integrated institutions with analytical and operational support in order" before the words "to improve";

(f) Paragraph 17.7 (c): After the words "means of transport," insert the words "including air and sea transport, which are vital to the expansion of the productivity and enhancement of competitiveness of the island economies,";

(g) Paragraph 17.9 (a): At the end of the paragraph, delete the words "and the development of new debt instruments and facilities";

(h) Paragraph 17.9: Add a new subparagraph (b) as follows:

"Another objective is to help Member States to formulate international and regional strategies to solve the problems stemming from external indebtedness, with an emphasis on improving the terms and conditions of this indebtedness. Special attention will also be paid to the issue of the development of new debt instruments and facilities"

and renumber the remaining subparagraphs accordingly;

(i) Paragraph 17.9 (d): In the fourth sentence, replace the words "A new articulation" with the word "Interaction"; replace the word "achieved" with the word "enhanced"; and replace the word "intense" with the word "intensive";

(j) Paragraph 17.10: After the words "necessary to change" add the words "or strengthen, where appropriate,";

(k) Paragraph 17.11 (b): In the second sentence, delete the words "in the formulation of policies and programmes and in control over their management";

(l) Subprogramme 17.6: Replace the title of the subprogramme with the title "Administrative management";

(m) Paragraph 17.12 (a):

(i) Replace the first sentence with the following:

"Effective public administration within a democratic framework is an important prerequisite for the type of development to which the Latin American and Caribbean region aspires";

(ii) Replace part of the third sentence up to the words "and at systematizing," with the following:

"The first objective is to arrive at clarifying the notion of an effective public administration reform";

(n) Paragraph 17.12 (b):

(i) In the first sentence, after the words "public agenda" add the words "where appropriate and in conformity with national priorities";

(ii) Delete the words from "on, among others" to the end of the sentence;

(o) Paragraph 17.12 (c):

(i) In the first sentence, replace the words "a substantial restructuring of the State and of public administration" with the words "the reform of the public administration";

(ii) In the second sentence, after the words "of the region" insert the words "upon requests of Governments concerned";

(p) Paragraph 17.12 (e): Replace the first sentence with the following:

"One aspect that must be appropriate in the context of the reform of the administrative management is the improvement, inter alia, of the regulatory function of the State as an entity promoting the efficient operation of market mechanisms";

(q) Paragraph 17.19: Replace the second sentence with the following:

"Thus, the role of the State is gradually being redefined in the management of the economy taking into account the specific evolution and necessity of each country, and a greater role has been given to other actors, forums and agents".

Programme 18. Economic and social development in Western Asia

185. At its 29th meeting, on 21 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 18, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 18)).

Discussion

186. Several delegations expressed the view that due importance should be assigned to the questions of water, population and labour force migration and that subprogramme 18.2 should have a specific reference to population growth and its implications for social services and education. Some delegations also expressed the view that reference should be made to trade.

187. Other delegations stressed the need for coordination with all other institutions pursuing similar objectives in the region, in particular the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and UNCTAD.

Conclusions and recommendations

188. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 18 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, taking into account the results of the process of internal restructuring currently under way in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Programme 19. Human rights

189. At its 30th meeting, on 21 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 19, Human rights, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 19)).

Discussion

190. A number of delegations supported the proposed programme of work and believed that it should be implemented immediately given its vital nature. Other delegations felt that the consideration of the programme should be postponed in order to take into account the deliberations of the General Assembly during its consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the restructuring of the Centre for Human Rights.

191. Some delegations expressed the view that paragraph 19.1 should be redrafted in order more accurately to reflect the objectives of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Other delegations considered that the text of the paragraph should be replaced only by a reference to the Vienna Declaration and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Some delegations considered that the reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be included in paragraph 19.3 (a). Several delegations felt that the text of paragraph 19.1 should include the provision that the political, historical, social, religious and cultural characteristics of each country, as well as respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of others, should be borne in mind. Some delegations stressed that the responsibility of the international community to promote effective cooperation

for the realization of the right to development and to eliminate obstacles to development should be properly reflected in paragraph 19.1. Other delegations supported the paragraphs as drafted.

192. A number of delegations felt that the 14 objectives indicated in paragraph 19.3 were well-balanced and represented a synergy of efforts. Other delegations considered those objectives to be not balanced, with some being too general and some too specific. Some delegations felt that the 14 objectives indicated in the paragraph seemed more like a strategy rather than objectives to be realized.

193. Some delegations felt that the three subprogrammes represented a more organizational than a programmatic structure. Other delegations felt that the narratives of subprogrammes contained duplication and that the fact-finding activities indicated in subprogramme 19.3 (paragraph 19.9) should be implemented under subprogramme 19.2. Other delegations welcomed the co-location of those activities. Several delegations stressed that the reference to avoidance of overlapping and duplication through effective coordination and continuing adaptation should be made in paragraph 19.9.

194. Some delegations felt that paragraph 19.3 (j), regarding the inclusion of a human rights dimension in United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, should be deleted, while other delegations supported that objective, emphasizing that it was implied that those activities were implemented only on the basis of resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly.

195. Many delegations felt that there should be a separate subprogramme for the right to development. Other delegations considered that the inclusion of the right to development in subprogramme 19.1 was appropriate and responded accurately to the relevant General Assembly resolution. Some delegations were of the opinion that the obstacles to the right to development and the ways and means to eliminate those obstacles should be described in subprogramme 19.1.

196. Some delegations were of the opinion that a reference to coordination between special rapporteurs and working groups should be included in paragraph 19.3 (f). Other delegations thought that the special procedures should be treated in the document as a whole separate issue since those activities had been of high priority in the previous medium-term plan.

197. Some delegations were of the view that the realization of the right to self-determination should be an important objective for programme 19 on human rights, and recommended that realization of the right to self-determination should be included among the measures listed in paragraph 19.3 (l).

198. Some delegations felt that the development of new norms and new standards and instruments mentioned in paragraphs 19.2 and 19.3 (n) was not an appropriate goal, and that the universal ratification of basic international human rights treaties mentioned in paragraph 19.3 (a) represented goals which were too ambitious and difficult to be realized during the plan period. Some delegations felt that the list of existing international instruments and standards should be included in the text of the programme. Some delegations considered that effective compliance with existing treaties should also be stressed.

199. The Committee discussed the following proposed amendments:

(a) <u>Create</u> a new subprogramme for the right to development;

(b) Delete paragraphs 19.1 and 19.3 (j) entirely;

(c) Paragraph 19.1: In the last sentence, after the words "the principle", insert the words "and recommendations";

(d) Paragraph 19.2: After the words "to support human rights organs and treaty monitoring bodies", delete the words "to anticipate potential serious violation and react to violations";

(e) Paragraph 19.3 (a): At the end of the paragraph, after the words "legislation of States", add the following:

"and the continuing adaptation of the United Nations human rights machinery to the current and future needs in the promotion and protection of human rights, as reflected in the Vienna Declaration";

(f) Paragraph 19.3 (b): Replace the words "each agency and programme" with the words "each of the United Nations organs, bodies and specialized agencies whose activities deal with human rights";

(g) Paragraph 19.3 (m): Replace the words "national institutions, grass-roots organizations and civil society" with the words "according to the legislative mandates in effect regarding this issue";

(h) Paragraph 19.5:

(i) After the words "the Declaration on the Right to Development", insert the words "and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action";

(ii) After the words "for the implementation of the right to development", insert the words "as an integral part of the fundamental human rights";

(i) Replace the title of subprogramme 19.2 with the following: "Supporting international procedures, bodies and organs relating to human rights";

(j) In the title of subprogramme 19.3, delete the words "support to human rights fact-finding procedures";

(k) Transfer paragraph 19.9 from subprogramme 19.3 to subprogramme 19.2;

(l) Paragraph 19.9: Delete the words "In the area of support to fact-finding bodies".

Conclusions and recommendations

200. The Committee considered programme 19, Human rights. During the discussion, divergent opinions were expressed on the content and structure of the programme. In that regard, the Committee took note of the programme and recommended that the General Assembly consider the programme, taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed and amendments proposed by Member States as reflected in the above section on the discussion.

Programme 20. Humanitarian assistance

201. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 20, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 20)).

Discussion

202. A number of delegations expressed their support for the activities of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the general thrust of the proposed programme 20.

203. Several delegations emphasized the importance of coordination of activities of the Department with those of relevant specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations involved in humanitarian assistance activities in order to avoid overlap and duplication.

204. Some delegations stressed the importance of activities related to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the need to ensure that those activities were not duplicated elsewhere in the Department.

205. Some delegations were of the view that the early warning capacity of the Department should be expanded to cover environmental emergencies, including nuclear-energy-related emergencies.

206. One delegation, which expressed strong support for the Department, also expressed concern that it was incorporating several new activities into its work plan without indicating how they would be financed. The delegation requested clarification of how the following new activities would be funded: (a) development and distribution of teaching materials for mine-awareness education programmes (para. 20.4 (e)); (b) promotion of the development of new technologies for mine-clearance operations (ibid.); (c) development of a strategy and operations plan for system-wide training, to include a training programme for complex emergency coordination staff at the Headquarters and field levels (para. 20.6 (d)); and (d) development of an environmental emergency service (para. 20.12 (c)). The delegation also asked for a clarification of the advocacy role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (para. 20.14 (b)).

Conclusions and recommendations

207. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 20 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Programme 21. Protection and assistance to refugees

208. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 21, Protection and assistance to refugees, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 21)).

Discussion

209. A number of delegations expressed their general support for the programme, the general thrust of the proposed medium-term plan and the strong emphasis on improving efficiency, transparency and accountability.

210. Some delegations were of the view that the objective of exploring the development of further measures in order to ensure international protection to all who needed it should be further elaborated.

211. Some delegations expressed the view that the statement in paragraph 21.5 (a) concerning forced population movements should be carefully formulated to ensure that it was consistent with the statements in the legislative mandate.

212. Some delegations considered that the main challenge in providing assistance was development. Broader recovery and development efforts other than quick-impact projects deserved more emphasis. In addition, cooperation of regional agencies and other United Nations agencies should be sought.

Conclusions and recommendations

213. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 21 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Replace paragraph 21.12 with the following:

"21.12 The final objective of this subprogramme is to help achieve permanent solutions to the problems of refugees. In that regard, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will promote the elaboration of more comprehensive regional approaches to resolve refugee situations and other forms of involuntary displacement, as appropriate. Of the classical durable solutions to refugee problems, namely, local settlement/integration, resettlement or voluntary repatriation, the preferred solution for UNHCR will be voluntary repatriation under conditions of safety and dignity, while attempts to formulate and implement appropriate regional solutions should be made";

(b) Replace paragraph 21.19 with the following:

"21.19 The final objective of this subprogramme will be that the link between the broader development efforts and the practicability of proposed solutions, such as reintegration assistance in support of voluntary repatriation, should be established and adequately taken into account. In that regard, UNHCR, when elaborating solutions, will work closely with development entities and international financial institutions".

Programme 22. Palestine refugees

214. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 22, Palestine refugees, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 22)).

Discussion

215. Delegations expressed their support for this programme and for its implementation.

216. One delegation stated that while the relocation of the Agency's headquarters will realize savings in the medium to long term, there may be additional costs in the initial stage for the setting up of necessary facilities. These costs may recur in the period 1998-2001.

Conclusions and recommendations

217. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 22 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 22.1: Replace the last sentence with the following:

"The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will provide emergency relief assistance to the beneficiary population and respond to requests from the Palestinian Authority, host Governments and the Secretary-General as they arise, commensurate with available resources";

(b) Paragraph 22.5: In the first sentence, replace the words "to the rest of the West Bank" with the words "in the West Bank" and combine the last two sentences to read "UNRWA will continue to maintain the services that it has provided for some 50 years, while preparing for the eventual transfer of its installations, services and programmes to local authorities";

(c) Paragraph 22.6: Add the following sentence between the second and third sentences:

"The Agency will also continue to support human resource development activities, including vocational training and scholarships for higher education for Palestine refugees, commensurate with available resources";

(d) Paragraph 22.8: In the fourth sentence, add the words "where appropriate" after the words "localization of posts".

Programme 23. Public information

218. At its 33rd and 34th meetings, on 25 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 23, Public information, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 23)).

Discussion

219. Many delegations expressed support for the efforts made to disseminate information through the use of new information technologies. However, some expressed reservations as some countries do not yet have the requisite technology to access that information. They urged the Secretariat to continue dissemination of information through traditional, cost-effective and

far-reaching modes of information dissemination, namely, radio broadcasting and print products.

220. Some delegations also expressed concern regarding the use of costly and modern technologies in view of the present budgetary constraints. Several delegations stated that the Secretariat should undertake an evaluation of the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the United Nations Information Centres in the context of modern communication technologies, while bearing in mind budgetary constraints. Other delegations suggested identification of priorities in the implementation of mandates with a view to achieving a better balance of available resources. They stressed the need to avoid overlap and duplication in the programme of work of the Department of Public Information.

221. Some delegations expressed support for the United Nations Information Centres and indicated that they played a crucial role in promoting global awareness about and support for the United Nations. Others indicated that the role of information centres was not adequately covered in the draft programme and felt that advances in modern communication technologies would transform the role of the information centres in certain countries, in some cases making them redundant.

222. A number of delegations indicated that public information activities in all outreach programmes should be conducted in strict compliance with established policy of maintaining full parity of treatment for all official languages of the United Nations.

Conclusions and recommendations

223. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 23 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 23.1: Add to the penultimate sentence, after the word 'Internet', the word 'CD-ROMs,';

(b) Paragraph 23.7: Replace, in the first sentence, the word 'ensure' with 'promote a positive image of the United Nations as an effective international organization relevant to the needs of the international community. To reach this goal, it will therefore be important';

(c) Paragraph 23.9: Replace 'peace-building' with the words 'post-conflict peace-building, development,' in the first sentence;

(d) Paragraph 23.15: Replace, in the first sentence, the word 'establish' with 'consider, in consultation with Member States and relevant intergovernmental bodies, the establishment of', and in the second sentence, replace the word 'this' with 'such a' and 'will' with 'could'.

Programme 24. Administrative services

224. At its 31st meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 24, Administrative services, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 24)).

Discussion

225. Several delegations stressed the importance of the programme because of its impact on the financial resources of the Organization. Accordingly, they believed that the programme narrative should have been more detailed. Other delegations expressed the view that it should not have concentrated on the status quo but rather should have brought into focus the objective of the programme for the next century. They indicated that the narrative should have addressed ways and means of making the Organization more efficient and effective. The view was also expressed that the programme narrative was concise and contained the basic guidelines necessary for the programme. An absence of clear and tightly drawn objectives was noted, as was the absence of benchmarks against which the programme could be judged.

226. Some delegations believed that references to the "financial crises" of the Organization should be deleted since it could not be determined that that would continue during the plan period. Several delegations stressed the importance of the full, timely and unconditional payment by Member States. They believed that an appeal to that effect should be included in the recommendations of the Committee to the General Assembly. Most delegations agreed that the promotion of intergovernmental agreement on measures to overcome the long-standing financial problems of the United Nations, particularly as related to the issue of the scale of assessments, was the prerogative of Member States and not of the Secretariat. Delegations, therefore, believed that such references should be deleted from the programme. Some queried why cash flow items appeared as activities of both subprogramme 24.1, Management services and 24.2, Programme planning, budget and accounts. The Secretariat explained that information on contributions was provided under 24.1 and expenditure data under 24.2.

227. A number of delegations believed that the backbone of any organization was qualified and competent staff and that paramount importance should be given to that issue in subprogramme 24.3, Human resources management. Most delegations regretted the absence in the objectives of the subprogramme of references to staff management relations, ratio of gender, geographical distribution, career development, the national competitive examinations and the advancement of women. Several delegations expressed concern about the deteriorating conditions of service of staff and its consequent effect on morale. The same delegations believed that conditions of service should be viewed more broadly, taking into account career development prospects, stability and the varying degrees of security of tenure. Other delegations stressed the necessity to correct the imbalance between the permanent and fixed-term appointments and promote more broadly the practice of secondment of qualified personnel by States to the Secretariat.

228. Under subprogramme 24.4, Support services, most delegations noted the absence of any planned upgrading of United Nations facilities under buildings and commercial services. The same delegations stressed the need to include improvement of United Nations facilities as one of the objectives of the subprogramme. One delegation expressed the view that only profitable activities should be maintained as income-producing activities. A number of delegations queried the objectives as regards procurement and transportation. Some delegations, while recognizing that the plan was a picture of the future, noted that the narrative did not describe the current situation. Others expressed the view that the narrative should be future-oriented and clearer objectives for future activities and targets should have been included.

229. Regarding subprogramme 24.5, Conference services, delegations expressed their views on the need to improve the efficiency, quality and timeliness of conference services. Some delegations emphasized the need to improve the quality of translation and the timeliness of documentation and to enforce the regulations governing documentation, in particular the six-weeks' rule for the distribution of documentation. Reference was also made to the need to limit documentation and make optimum use of conference services. A number of delegations believed that increased reliance on contractual translation was not justified and that any expansion in its use could erode the expertise of the United Nations and the confidentiality of information. Other delegations stressed the importance of providing conference services to meetings of regional and other bilateral groups and the need for effective enforcement on the length of documentation. Other delegations emphasized the need to respect cost constraints, to develop better cost information and to improve the global planning of conference services.

230. One delegation proposed the addition of a new subprogramme, to be entitled "Internal oversight". Other delegations did not share that position.

Conclusions and recommendations

231. The Committee recommended approval of the narrative of the activities of the proposed programme 24 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 24.5: In the second sentence, replace the word "crisis" with the word "situation";

(b) Paragraph 24.6 (a): Replace the subparagraph with the following:

"To facilitate the work of the Committee on Contributions through the provision of technical services;";

(c) Paragraph 24.6 (c): Replace the word "permit" with the word "ensure";

(d) Paragraph 24.8 (a): Replace the words "functioning of an" with the words "functioning of a simplified, yet efficient and";

(e) Paragraph 24.10 (a): At the end of the subparagraph add the following:

"and to improve transparency in the presentation of all accounts of the United Nations to facilitate the deliberations and decision-making of intergovernmental bodies";

(f) Paragraph 24.10 (g): At the end of the subparagraph add the following:

"in accordance with and in full compliance with General Assembly resolutions and decisions";

(g) Paragraph 24.12:

(i) Delete the word "global" throughout the paragraph wherever it appears (24.12, and subparagraphs (a), (c), (d) and (h)) before the word "Secretariat";

(ii) In the first sentence, replace the words "respond dynamically to the needs of Member States" with "carry out its functions efficiently and effectively";

(h) Paragraph 24.12 (a): After the words "management system;" add the following:

"establishment of career development policy in the Secretariat with regard to all types of appointments and with due consideration to adequate balance between permanent and fixed-term appointments; to continue with the practice of secondment of qualified personnel by Member States to the United Nations Secretariat;";

(i) Paragraph 24.12 (c): At the end of the subparagraph, add ", and to continue to hold national competitive examinations as a useful tool to select the best qualified candidates";

(j) Paragraph 24.12 (g): Replace the subparagraph with the following:

"To implement conditions of service approved by the General Assembly, and to take effective action on work/life issues in order to attract and retain appropriately qualified, high-performing staff";

(k) Paragraph 24.12 (h):

(i) Between the words "skills" and "enabling", insert the words "including language skills";

(ii) After the words "changing organizational needs" add the words "to deal with emergency situations";

(l) Paragraph 24.12 (i): At the end of the subparagraph, add the words "subject to further consideration by and prior approval of the General Assembly";

(m) Paragraph 24.17: After the word "area" add the words "subject to prior approval of the General Assembly";

(n) Paragraph 24.18: After the words "engineering expertise" add the words "to upgrade these facilities periodically";

(o) Paragraph 24.20: Replace the text of the paragraph with the following:

"The objective in this area is to restructure the procurement and transportation function to provide the Organization with more responsive, expeditious and cost-effective procurement of goods and services for Headquarters, regional offices and field missions and, in this regard, to ensure competitive, fair and transparent process";

(p) Paragraph 24.21 (b): Delete the subparagraph;

(q) Paragraph 24.21 (c): Replace the text of the subparagraph with the following:

"To develop and maintain a database comprising suppliers from all geographical regions of the world by introducing a simplified and

transparent mode of registration as well as procedures for the deletion of outdated information";

(r) Paragraph 24.21 (d): Replace the words "To seek" with "To diversify the database by seeking continually";

(s) Paragraph 24.21 (e): Replace the text of the subparagraph with the following:

"To develop a computer program to select registered suppliers from all geographical regions to ensure competitiveness, transparency and equity during procurement exercises";

(t) Paragraph 24.21 (f): After subparagraph 24.21 (e), add the following new subparagraph:

"To improve further upon the methodology for uniform practices and procedures in evaluation of bids and awarding of contracts";

(u) Paragraph 24.24 (a): At the end of the subparagraph, add the words "with rational allocation and capacity utilization of the existing conference resources";

(v) Paragraph 24.24 (b): At the end of the subparagraph, add the following:

"in particular through regular consultation with committees and bodies at Headquarters and other duty stations to assess their needs and through the development of a cost-accounting system";

(w) Paragraph 24.25:

(i) In the second sentence, add the word "routinely" before the word "developed";

(ii) Replace the words "monitored, and" with the words "provided for both Secretariat and external use (e.g. by intergovernmental bodies)";

(iii) Delete the word "and" after the word "monitored" and begin a new sentence with the words "Technical advice";

(x) Paragraph 24.28 (b): At the end of the subparagraph, add the words "six weeks in advance of all meetings";

(y) Paragraph 24.28 (c): After subparagraph 24.28 (b), add the following new subparagraph:

"To ensure enforcement of regulations concerning documentation".

Programme 25. Internal oversight

232. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 25, Internal oversight, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6 (Prog. 25)).

Discussion

233. Many delegations expressed support for the programme. A few delegations noted that no mention was made of an inspection element in subprogramme 25.3, and one delegation inquired about possible overlap of some contents of subprogrammes 25.1 and 25.3.

234. The importance of ensuring the implementation of recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services was emphasized by some. Some delegations also emphasized the need for measurable objectives and outputs.

235. The importance of coordination of the activities by the Office of Internal Oversight Services with the Board of Auditors, the Panel of External Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) was recognized, and the representative of the Office explained how this was being achieved in practice.

236. Some delegations noted that, consistent with an earlier decision, Internal oversight appeared as a separate programme. Nevertheless, some delegations expressed the view that this programme should not be a separate programme but should become a part of programme 24, Administrative services.

Conclusions and recommendations

237. The Committee recommended approval of the narrative of the activities of the proposed programme 25 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 with the following modifications:

(a) Paragraph 25.14 (c) bis: Add a new subparagraph after paragraph 25.14 (c) reading:

"(d) To undertake timely identification of problems affecting the full, effective and efficient implementation of programmed activities and recommend corrective measures as appropriate";

(b) Paragraph 25.17 (b) bis: Add a new subparagraph after paragraph 25.17 (b) reading:

"(c) To provide guidance to the Secretary-General on jurisdictional or disciplinary action to be taken following a finding of waste, fraud or mismanagement with respect to the staff and resources of the Organization".

B. Outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

238. At its 38th and 40th meetings, on 3 and 4 September 1996, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General containing the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1998-1999 (A/51/289).

Discussion

239. A number of delegations welcomed the outline as proposed by the Secretary-General. The expressed support for the efforts made to improve efficiency and productivity within the Organization.

240. Many delegations expressed deep concern about the preliminary estimates of resources proposed to accommodate the activities during the biennium 1998-1999.

241. Many delegations, while appreciating the efforts to improve efficiency, expressed deep concern that a proposed reduction was envisaged for international cooperation for development and regional cooperation for development, while political activities and internal oversight showed a proposed increase. Therefore, they also expressed the need that all mandated programmes and activities for international and regional cooperation for development receive sufficient resources so as not to disrupt their full implementation.

242. Some delegations observed that compared with the provisional total of US$ 2,712,265,200 for the biennium 1996-1997 referred to in paragraph 1 of resolution 50/214, Part IV, the preliminary estimates represent a reduction of 10.4 per cent.

243. Many delegations, noting with concern the negative growth contained in the outline, indicated the need to implement all the mandates approved by Member States. Other delegations emphasized the need for zero nominal growth budgets for the duration of the financial crisis.

244. Many delegations welcomed the assurances given by the Secretary-General to the effect that the objectives of the programmes included in the proposed medium-term plan could be pursued in 1998-1999 within the overall level of resources included in the proposed outline.

245. Many delegations stressed the importance of payment of assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition.

246. One delegation stated that a specific scheme should be formulated to implement the proposal that savings resulting from improved cost-effectiveness should be reinvested in development programmes.

247. Many delegations emphasized that the outline should be regarded only as a preliminary estimate. One delegation noted that the level of the programme budget for 1998-1999 should not exceed the level of the proposed budget outline.

248. Many delegations stated that the financial projections contained in the outline should in no way constitute a ceiling.

249. Many delegations supported the proposed inclusion of provisions for special missions in the outline. Many delegations expressed the view that provisions should not be made for mandates which had not been approved. Several delegations proposed that consideration be given to having the proposed provision for special missions separate from part II of the budget outline.

250. Many delegations were of the view that the additional provision of $70 million for special missions that had no mandates at present was not in keeping with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. They further stated that should the General Assembly or other organs of the United Nations mandate activities relating to maintenance of international peace and security subsequent to the adoption of the programme budget, there were established procedures and relevant provisions in the Financial Regulations and Rules to meet such expenditures. Some delegations further stressed the need to review the budgetary process approved in that resolution, including the process of decision-making.

251. While supporting the proposed inclusion of a contingency for special missions in the outline, many delegations expressed the view that budgetary provisions could only be made for approved mandates.

252. Some delegations stated that the Secretary-General should provide a clear picture which would facilitate the examination by Member States of the staff reduction. They requested that the Secretariat provide an organigram of each department, accompanied by definitions of the tasks entrusted to each individual unit forming each department, the nationality of the staff whose posts were under suppression and the impact on the principle of equitable geographical representation and quota.

253. Many delegations welcomed the proposal to resort to net budgeting in respect of jointly financed activities. Others advocated that that method also be applied to staff assessment. Others expressed the view that more information would be needed in this regard.

254. Some delegations welcomed the proposed level of the contingency fund, while others expressed the view that it might not be adequate. Many others expressed the view that this proposal is not in keeping with the provisions of resolution 41/213 and that more information will be needed before adopting a decision.

255. Many delegations expressed the view that the legislative body of the Organization on administrative and budgetary issues had to adopt a decision regarding the proposed savings in the budget for 1996-1997 and the eventual absorption of the new activities.

256. Other delegations noted with satisfaction the savings already achieved during the current biennium by the Secretary-General under his own authority.

257. Some delegations underlined the role of the substantive bodies in the United Nations planification and budgetary process. They stressed that the outline had to be considered together with the outcome of the negotiations to be held at the fifty-first session on the level of savings proposed which led the Assembly to appropriate for the biennium $2,608,300,000 instead of $2,712,265,200, representing the expenditure estimates for the approved activities. The outline also had to be considered together with the decision to be adopted by the General Assembly on the possible absorption of additional activities in the programme budget for 1996-1997.

Conclusions and recommendations

258. The Committee examined the outline, using as a framework the four aspects listed in paragraph 1 of the report of the Secretary-General:

(a) The preliminary estimate of resources to accommodate the proposed programme of activities during the biennium;

(b) Priorities, reflecting trends of a broad sectoral nature;

(c) Real growth, positive or negative, compared with the previous budget;

(d) Size of the contingency fund expressed as a percentage of the overall level of resources.

259. The Committee took note of document A/51/289 "Outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999" which contains, inter alia the preliminary estimate proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 2 of his report, the breakdown by parts of the budget and the proposed size of the contingency fund. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly give further consideration to all the elements contained in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget outline for 1998-1999, taking into account divergent views of Member States as reflected above in the discussion part of the present section.

ANNEX

List of documents before the Committee at the second part of its thirty-sixth session

(26 August-6 September 1996)

A/51/6	Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001
A/51/289	Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1998-1999
E/AC.51/1996/L.8 and Add.1-27	Draft report of the Committee on the second part of its thirty-sixth session
E/AC.51/1996/L.7/Rev.1	Proposed programme of work
E/AC.51/1996/INF/2	List of delegations